

## **II. The Role of the Chief Technology Officer in Promoting Innovation**

Substantial innovation capacity exists throughout the organization. Several operating and staff divisions house innovation units that are focused on mission-relevant topics, such as drug development, healthcare delivery or biomedical research. As part of the Immediate Office of the Secretary, the Chief Technology Officer oversees opportunities to leverage underutilized assets – initially identified as data and our human capital – to maximize productivity. We are uniquely positioned to incubate and oversee Department-wide innovation activities. Thus, our programs address crosscutting problems that impact Secretarial priorities, affect multiple units of the organization, and demand an enterprise-wide solution.

The Chief Technology Officer, a position established 3 years ago, operates under the following set of core beliefs:

- 1) Every individual (employee or stakeholder) has the ability to improve the health and well-being of all Americans;
- 2) people are more powerful when working together, and;
- 3) there is a solution to every problem.

Therefore, when it comes to recognizing the full value in the Department's human capital, our mission is to identify the people inside and outside of government who passionately believe in their ideas, connect them, and provide them with the environment they need to successfully execute.

With regard to leveraging our underutilized data assets, our mission is to liberate valuable datasets and promote creative applications to improve health and health care. We work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to develop a vibrant ecosystem that utilizes our data as the rocket fuel for innovation. We play key roles in educating stakeholders about what can be done with our data, incentivizing the use of data to solve problems, and showcasing ways in which data-driven solutions can transform health care and human services.

Our specific approach is to incubate new concepts and catalyze innovation initiatives that can be piloted centrally, with the idea that they can eventually be absorbed, mirrored or copied at the program level. Thus, our portfolio is one that is constantly shifting, shrinking or growing to meet the innovation needs of the Department. Over the next three years, we will consider the overall mission of our unit as having been fully accomplished when we are no longer needed, and when the tools and strategies we have catalyzed are woven into the fabric of employee culture across our operating divisions.